



For Immediate Release

Contact: Craig Orfield  
(202) 224-6770

Wednesday, April 1, 2009

***ENZI COMMENDS INSURERS' CALL FOR COOPERATIVE EFFORT  
TO REFORM HEALTH CARE,  
PROMOTE HIGHER-QUALITY, LOWER-COST PLANS***

**Washington, D.C.** – U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today wrote two of the nation's leading health insurers and urged them to continue working with Congress to find ways to offer higher-quality, lower-cost health care plans.

“We need you to work with health care providers, patient advocates, other stakeholders and those of us in Congress to find comprehensive solutions to bring down health care costs and insurance premiums,” Enzi wrote. “We need to work together on insurance market reforms that will allow you to offer higher-quality health insurance plans at more affordable prices.”

Responding to a letter from the Presidents of America's Health Insurance Plans and Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, Enzi thanked them for coming forward with ideas for health care reform and urged them to be a strong partner as Congress works to enact health care reform.

“Your willingness to find possible areas for compromise to solve our health crisis is a good sign that a bipartisan deal is possible if everyone comes to the table with an open mind and an eye toward solutions,” Enzi wrote. “As Congress works to ensure access to high-quality, affordable health care for all Americans, I hope that you will continue to work with us in a productive way to resolve these difficult issues.”

####

CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, CONNECTICUT  
TOM HARKIN, IOWA  
BARBARA A. MIKULSKI, MARYLAND  
JEFF BINGAMAN, NEW MEXICO  
PATTY MURRAY, WASHINGTON  
JACK REED, RHODE ISLAND  
BERNARD SANDERS (I), VERMONT  
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO  
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA  
KAY R. HAGAN, NORTH CAROLINA  
JEFF MERKLEY, OREGON

MICHAEL B. ENZI, WYOMING  
JUDD GREGG, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
LAMAR ALEXANDER, TENNESSEE  
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA  
JOHNNY ISAKSON, GEORGIA  
JOHN MCCAIN, ARIZONA  
ORRIN G. HATCH, UTAH  
LISA MURKOWSKI, ALASKA  
TOM COBURN, M.D., OKLAHOMA  
PAT ROBERTS, KANSAS

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6300

J. MICHAEL MYERS, STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL  
FRANK J. MACCHIAROLA, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

April 1, 2009

Karen Ignagni  
President and CEO  
America's Health Insurance Plans

Dear Ms. Ignagni,

Thank you for coming forward with new ideas to help reform our nation's broken health care system. Your willingness to find possible areas for compromise to solve our health crisis is a good sign that a bipartisan deal is possible if everyone comes to the table with an open mind and an eye toward solutions.

Your letter served as a reminder that misusing budget reconciliation to enact health care reform is exactly the wrong prescription for our health care needs. This policy is not only short-sighted, as reforms would be limited in scope and temporary, it would shut out good ideas at a time when stakeholders who were once adversaries are coming together to offer unique solutions.

The issue of reducing health care costs and expanding coverage is a difficult challenge, but I believe there is real potential to enact bipartisan reforms. As Congress works to ensure access to high-quality, affordable health care for all Americans, I hope that you will continue to work with us in a productive way to resolve these difficult issues.

Free market health insurance plans must play a critical role in expanding coverage to include all Americans. However, simply expanding coverage will not solve the larger problem of skyrocketing health care costs.

We need you to work with health care providers, patient advocates, other stakeholders and those of us in Congress to find comprehensive solutions to bring down health care costs and insurance premiums. We need to work together on insurance market reforms that will allow you to offer higher-quality health insurance plans at more affordable prices. And, we need to help patients get better value out of every health care dollar they spend by developing a competitive market for insurance and health care delivery. Allowing consumers to compare prices and quality information will help them identify providers and plans that provide the best care at the best price.

Ultimately, promoting robust, free market competition between health insurance plans offers the best opportunity to achieve better value and drive innovation, while preserving patients' rights to choose the physicians, hospitals, and other providers that best suit their needs.

I urge you to be a strong voice for fiscal responsibility as Congress and the country debate health care reform. Some have argued that we need to fix health care in order to address our current economic crisis. This argument misses the point. If we enact the wrong health care fix, we will create a new crisis far worse than anything we have seen. We cannot pass these costs along to future generations of Americans. Congress must find a way to pay for health care reform and fully offset the costs of any proposal. I hope you will stand up for your members, their children and their grandchildren by supporting efforts to enact fiscally responsible reforms.

I welcome your suggestions and your questions, and I look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that every American has access to high-quality, affordable health care.

Sincerely,



Senator Michael B. Enzi



CHRISTOPHER J. DODD, CONNECTICUT  
TOM HARKIN, IOWA  
BARBARA A. MIKULSKI, MARYLAND  
JEFF BINGAMAN, NEW MEXICO  
PATTY MURRAY, WASHINGTON  
JACK REED, RHODE ISLAND  
BERNARD SANDERS (I), VERMONT  
SHERROD BROWN, OHIO  
ROBERT P. CASEY, JR., PENNSYLVANIA  
KAY R. HAGAN, NORTH CAROLINA  
JEFF MERKLEY, OREGON

MICHAEL B. ENZI, WYOMING  
JUDD GREGG, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
LAMAR ALEXANDER, TENNESSEE  
RICHARD BURR, NORTH CAROLINA  
JOHNNY ISAKSON, GEORGIA  
JOHN MCCAIN, ARIZONA  
ORRIN G. HATCH, UTAH  
LISA MURKOWSKI, ALASKA  
TOM COBURN, M.D., OKLAHOMA  
PAT ROBERTS, KANSAS

## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6300

J. MICHAEL MYERS, STAFF DIRECTOR AND CHIEF COUNSEL  
FRANK J. MACCHIAROLA, REPUBLICAN STAFF DIRECTOR

April 1, 2009

Scott P. Serota  
President and CEO  
Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Dear Mr. Serota,

Thank you for coming forward with new ideas to help reform our nation's broken health care system. Your willingness to find possible areas for compromise to solve our health crisis is a good sign that a bipartisan deal is possible if everyone comes to the table with an open mind and an eye toward solutions.

Your letter served as a reminder that misusing budget reconciliation to enact health care reform is exactly the wrong prescription for our health care needs. This policy is not only short-sighted, as reforms would be limited in scope and temporary, it would shut out good ideas at a time when stakeholders who were once adversaries are coming together to offer unique solutions.

The issue of reducing health care costs and expanding coverage is a difficult challenge, but I believe there is real potential to enact bipartisan reforms. As Congress works to ensure access to high-quality, affordable health care for all Americans, I hope that you will continue to work with us in a productive way to resolve these difficult issues.

Free market health insurance plans must play a critical role in expanding coverage to include all Americans. However, simply expanding coverage will not solve the larger problem of skyrocketing health care costs.

We need you to work with health care providers, patient advocates, other stakeholders and those of us in Congress to find comprehensive solutions to bring down health care costs and insurance premiums. We need to work together on insurance market reforms that will allow you to offer higher-quality health insurance plans at more affordable prices. And, we need to help patients get better value out of every health care dollar they spend by developing a competitive market for insurance and health care delivery. Allowing consumers to compare prices and quality information will help them identify providers and plans that provide the best care at the best price.

Ultimately, promoting robust, free market competition between health insurance plans offers the best opportunity to achieve better value and drive innovation, while preserving patients' rights to choose the physicians, hospitals, and other providers that best suit their needs.

I urge you to be a strong voice for fiscal responsibility as Congress and the country debate health care reform. Some have argued that we need to fix health care in order to address our current economic crisis. This argument misses the point. If we enact the wrong health care fix, we will create a new crisis far worse than anything we have seen. We cannot pass these costs along to future generations of Americans. Congress must find a way to pay for health care reform and fully offset the costs of any proposal. I hope you will stand up for your members, their children and their grandchildren by supporting efforts to enact fiscally responsible reforms.

I welcome your suggestions and your questions, and I look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that every American has access to high-quality, affordable health care.

Sincerely,



Senator Michael B. Enzi